

NB Docket No. 04-233

**Susan Fisenne**

**From:** Wendy Chambers  
**Sent:** Friday, June 29, 2007 4:20 PM  
**To:** Susan Fisenne  
**Subject:** FW: re comments before the FCC on 062807 in Portland, ME by David Schwartz

For your review. Thanks

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 Office of the Secretary

**From:** Davskischw [mailto:davskischw@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, June 29, 2007 1:54 PM  
**To:** dtayloratateweb  
**Subject:** re comments before the FCC on 062807 in Portland, ME by David Schwartz

To: Commissioner Tate,  
 cc: Commissioner Martin, Copps, Adelstein  
 please forward to Commissioner McDowell

piece is about 1000 words long. please note that it will likely shortly be forwarded to the NY Times Op ed section as well as elsewhere on the web.

062907 comments to and about the Federal Communications Commission public hearing held in Portland, Maine, on June 28, 2007:

Elaborated and extended comments of (Jed) David D. Schwartz, currently residing at 64 Bow St., Somerville, MA 02143:

1. The FCC could implement financial lobbying (of stations) transparency, involving the public recording and disclosure of corporate lobbying and other (gratuitous) contributions all of which would seem to impact upon the use of political "spin" and other editorial policies disguised as the objective treatment of contentious issues in the news. That is to say, that the acceptance of gratuitous financial contributions without such contributions being publicly acknowledged would constitute perhaps a felony level offense, punishable by fine and/or penal incarceration.
2. That is to say, the auditing of politically and economically oriented programming could become one of the assumed duties of members of the FCC staff, such that the apparent lack of genuine fairness and objectivity in the treatment of the news and public policy and legal issues might constitute a clue to the effect that unreported contributions had occurred.
3. It is suggested that there is a true causal correlation connection between attention deficit hyper activity disorder malignity (ADHD) and the amount of television watching coupled with the increased incidence of absolute advertising interruptions. Therefore it is recommended that the FCC move to reduce the legally allowable amount of advertising time by a significant amount, allowing say between five and seven minutes of advertising per program. Note some experimentation would be probably be desirable in order to determine an optimum level of advertising.
4. It is my impression that the public (as well as this writer) is unaware of the magnitude of the legal tax and licensing

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burden assumed by media television and radio broadcasters as well as by newspapers. So that the recommendation is that the FCC reexamine this issue to the end of assuring that especially the large media corporations not get away with unjustified huge profits while in effect often dis serving the public interest. Note that FreePress.net asserting that GE Media companies made approximately 147 billion US dollars in the year 2006.

5. It is the belief of this writer that diversity of controlling ownership knowledge sources can be an antidote against the use of disinformation and propaganda in the display and interpretation of the news. Therefore it is this writer's position that allowing excessive ownership concentration in either national or local markets runs the risk that the public's need to know what is going on and what what is going on means will be seriously damaged. In other words, that assuring diverse sources of ownership, including where possible local ownership, coupled with serious enforcement efforts designed to prevent the application of undisclosed covert financial influence re the reporting of the news, together could constitute an antidote to the plethora of sector specific corporate disinformation and propaganda that seems to be currently afflicting much of the news media particularly in crucial and critical area of the debate or perhaps struggle is a better word over the issue of climate change or global warming.
6. We appear as a nation to be in a bit of a rat hole,, led by a media with an apparently insatiable appetite for ever larger profit margins, to which end this media tends to appeal to our collective baser instincts. This rat hole seems to be contributing to the dissolution of traditional community life and virtues. In the words of the late sociologist and communications studies academic Neil Postman, we seem to be in serious danger of "amusing ourselves to death." Perhaps adult viewers should be addressed as adults and where possible children addressed as children, so that children not be addressed where possible as adults as too often seems to be the case. Perhaps the FCC should consider pushing erectile dysfunction medicine advertisements back past the hour of ten o'clock at night so that children could be screened out of being subjected to them were their parents to prohibit watching television after nine or ten o'clock.
7. One antidote to the display of sensationalism in pursuit of escapist profits might involve a legal cap on allowable media generated profits, or a dedicated and steeper more progressive tax rate bracket on media/entertainment generated profits. Raising taxes on media entertainment and infotainment (the news as entertainment) has not so far breached public consciousness and become a political issue, in part, I believe because the public is unaware of the degree to which it has become enthralled and perhaps even hypnotically involved and emotionally dependent upon media especially television media actors and spokespersons. In fact as indicated in an earlier paragraph, this public dependence upon media figures coupled with the seeming deliberate cultivation of factual uncertainty, allows the media to implicitly defend and ensconce the powers of the oil cartel status quo to which end efforts to nurse rather than squander the planet's supply of petroleum have been subverted.
8. What profit margins are being held up as necessary and desirable such that news staff members and entire media outlets are being sold off to larger corporations with deeper pockets and why?

(Note that Suzanne Gaucher (sp?) in her testimony as a panelist before the FCC as well as perhaps off the record(?), stated that many privately owned media outlets (in Maine if not elsewhere) were forced to sell as a result of a federally unfunded mandate to convert to digital technological facilities.

9. Note too the assertion of Manuel Castells, the Cal/Berkeley sociologist, in his trilogy **The Rise of the Network Society** (with which I concur) that the media seemingly deliberately with its advertitus interruptus, and its neglect of historical information and context in the covering of the news, seems for the most part to depend upon the dissolution of it's audience's and society's collective sense of remembered history the better no doubt to facilitate the manipulation of public opinion and behavior. In this regard it is important perhaps to remember that Tom Brokaw's "Greatest Generation" was never exposed to and grew up without being aware of television's existence.

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